

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-1804

April 4, 2006

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Bush,

In response to the information provided to the Louisiana Congressional Delegation last week on the Administration's failure to seek funding to implement adequate levee and flood protection for the people in Jefferson, St. Bernard, Plaquemines and Orleans Parishes, Louisiana, I urge you to do the following:

1. Make a national commitment, backed by the full weight of the Office of the President of the United States and your entire administration, to an immediate action plan to fully fund and implement an integrated, coordinated, comprehensive levee, flood control and coastal restoration program to protect the lives of Americans throughout coastal Louisiana. Such a commitment must include authorization and full funding of immediate levee and flood control projects as well as a federal revenue sharing plan that would provide a reliable revenue stream to fund further levee, flood control, coastal and wetlands restoration projects and maintenance for years to come. Mr. President, such a national commitment has never been made by your administration and it is desperately needed. Members of the Louisiana Congressional Delegation from both parties have asked your administration for such a national commitment for a long time.
2. Make an immediate, specific and formal request to Congress on behalf of your administration for the funding and authorization of at least an additional \$6 billion in appropriations to implement an integrated, coordinated, comprehensive levee, flood control and coastal restoration program for the Southeast Louisiana/New Orleans area. Your own administration has found such a program to be necessary relative to the FEMA 100-year flood elevation issue. Your appointee, Mr. Donald Powell, coordinator of federal recovery efforts in the Gulf Coast, has told us that without a formal request for significant strengthening of levees and flood protection in the affected areas, to at least "certified" levels, that FEMA flood maps will assume that there is no such protection at all. As you are aware, this could have catastrophic effects on the ability of our region to rebuild and recover from last year's historic storm devastation.

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3. Implement Executive Orders to the agencies in your administration under your control, including the Army Corps of Engineers, to take emergency steps to fast track this request through the planning process to ensure timely implementation.

As a member of the United States Senate representing Louisiana, I will do whatever is necessary to support you in the implementation of this request and commitment.

Because this is literally a life-or-death situation for the people of my state, I am compelled to notify you that I will exercise my power as a member of the Senate to stop further consideration of all Executive appointments until significant progress is made on such a request and commitment.

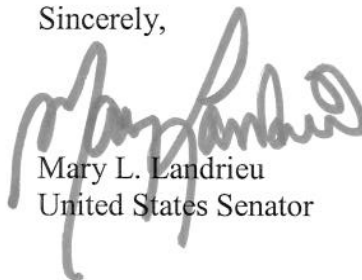
Mr. President, the piecemeal approach that has marked your Administration's response to providing adequate levee and flood protection for Louisiana has not worked. It needs to be replaced by a comprehensive approach that is both more effective and cost-efficient.

Money spent on levees and flood control today will save the federal government billions in the future by eliminating the need for costly post-storm recovery and rebuilding in areas that were not adequately protected. That is a major lesson learned from last year's horrifying experience.

The people of my state cannot wait any longer. We can no longer rely on promises. We need action, and we need action now.

I look forward to working with you and the rest of my colleagues in the Louisiana Congressional Delegation on behalf of an emergency levee and flood control plan as well as a long-term coastal revenue plan to protect American lives, as well as American energy and economic security, in coastal Louisiana.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mary Landrieu", written over the printed name and title.

Mary L. Landrieu
United States Senator